

Points of Contact

There are three early points of contact between you and the person hiring when impressions are being formed: the written application, the telephone call to schedule an interview, and the interview itself. A few minutes of thought and planning will help prepare you for a successful interview.

Telephone Tips:

When the call for an interview is received.

- If you have an answering machine, the message should promote the image you want to portray to an employer. Avoid jokes and music that might be misinterpreted. Keep the message simple and return the call as soon as you can.
- During a phone conversation, the caller cannot see your facial expressions or gestures. The impression received depends on what is heard. Keep your face relaxed. A smile is conveyed through the tone and quality of your voice.
- Use a clear and pleasant speaking style.
- At the end of the conversation, repeat the interview appointment details for confirmation and thank the caller.

Grooming and Dress for a Successful Interview

To many employers, first impressions count. When preparing for a job interview, take a few minutes to think about what your appearance tells an employer about you.

Hints for a Positive Appearance

- Dressing neatly and conservatively is a safe choice. Knowing that your appearance is good may give you added confidence during the interview.
- How do you find out what is proper dress for a company? Some suggestions might include:
 - Clean, conservative, and comfortable shoes
 - Cleaned and trimmed fingernails
 - Minimal cologne
 - Minimal jewelry
 - No gum or candy
 - Well groomed hair style
 - Be aware of your general body language such as your posture, eye contact, and rate of speech. Practice before the interview. Do you appear confident, calm, and knowledgeable?
- There is no one right answer regarding dress and style, but some thought and attention to your presentation may help prepare you for a successful interview.

Find Out About the Job

- Plan ahead and find out more about the job. Make an appointment with a Human Resources Management Service staff member to review the position description of a job in which you are interested.
- Read the vacancy announcement and pay particular attention to the knowledge and skills required.
- Think about your past and current work experiences where you have demonstrated the required knowledge and skills.
- Remember to include any education or training classes you have completed which are related to the required knowledge and skills.
- Outline your accomplishments that are specific to the required knowledge and skills of the job.
- Plan to share this information during the interview. Practice sharing this information with friends or family members. You may want to prepare notes to take with you.
- Go to the Library and view a PBI video.
- Network with colleagues. Ask about the job.

Where Can I Learn More About Preparing for an Interview?

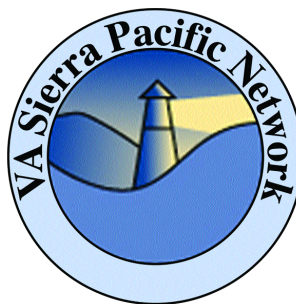
Contact your Library Service staff to check out the videotapes “More Than A Gut Feeling II” and “Get Hired! How to Ace the Interview.” You can also find a great deal of information on the internet. If you don’t know how to access the internet, ask a friend to help you. You can also go to your local library and ask for help on how to use the internet. While we use the term “performance based interviewing” in the VA, you will want to use the term “behavioral interview” when searching the internet. There are many sites with very useful information. The following are just a few you may want to look at:

- www.eng.iastate.edu/ecs/students/Interviewing/interviewing/tsld007.htm
- www.departments.bucknell.edu/career_dev/resumes_coverlett/interviewing_how_to.html
- www.wcupa.edu/_information/afa/humanresources/empbbquestions.htm
- www.va.gov/pbi

High Performance Development Model – Expected Outcomes

As the High Performance Development Model is implemented at all levels within VHA, we will evolve into an organization that learns continuously, is aligned with the competencies needed for today and tomorrow, and offers opportunities for growth and career development to all employees. Immediate results will include improved employee satisfaction, and more efficient, effective options.

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Performance Based Interviewing:

Marketing Yourself

